

# IN THE BEGINNING



Published Quarterly  
Woodson County Historical Society  
Yates Center, Kansas  
**Vol. 9 - No. 36**

## IN THE BEGINNING

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October, 1976

*Lester A. Harding*

### Editor's Notes —

Our cover picture on the July, 1976 issue, an old tractor which we were told could be an International. But we were set straight on this by several who said the tractor was known as a Parrot - referred by some as their "Polly Parrot." It was a three speed tractor, that cranked on the right side.

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In giving the names of the teachers of the Finney School District No. 49, in some way one of the teachers was omitted. We do not know just how that came about as every year was accounted for. The term of 1926-27, was taught by Harold Spencer, later known by many as Dr. Harold.

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### IN MEMORIAN

Harvey Klick

53

May 24, 1976

Mr. Klick was a native of Woodson County and held a Life Membership in the Historical Society.

Russell Manske

59

June 2, 1976

Mr. Manske was a Charter Member of the Woodson County Historical Society. He was one of the first to sign as a member.

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The membership of this Historical Society remains rather stable - at around 250 members. This includes 105 Life Members and the balance regular.

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At this time we are not certain about raising the subscription price of IN THE BEGINNING, as we do not know what the postage might be. We do not want to raise the price, but may be forced to do so.

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The cover picture this issue was taken at a round-up at the Kimbell Ranch in 1913.

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Published Quarterly By

Woodson County Historical Society

Yates Center, Kansas

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WOODSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Organized March, 1965

The Woodson County Historical Museum has had a good season for 1976.

It was open five days a week - Tuesday through Sunday with two volunteer persons there each open day.

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In the July, 1976 issue of IN THE BEGINNING, we mentioned the Woodson County Bicentennial Committee had as a project, the moving of a log cabin from along Big Sandy Creek to the lot at the west side of the Museum. The Woodson County Historical Society is cooperating in this project. The cabin was taken down log by log and brought to Yates Center by volunteer labor, and stored on the Museum lot.

It was found that despite the 110 years the cabin had stood there the majority of the logs were in fair condition. A foundation was made to the west of the Museum and the cabin began to take shape. The old cabin was 20 by 18 feet, and the reconstructed one is 18 by 16. Most of the logs were some deteriorated on the end so a foot was cut off each end. A place was left open where the original fire place had been. The stone fireplace from the Askren cabin on Turkey Creek will be placed there.

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Around 52 pupils of the fifth grade of the Yates Center Elementary school toured the Museum the morning of September 8, 1976. They also looked the log cabin over as it stood without any roof and the logs not chinked. The teachers with these pupils were Mrs. Edwina Martin and Mrs. Nora Shepard.

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While not nearly completed the old Daniel log cabin is drawing considerable attention and we believe will be quite an asset to the Historical Museum. While it is a Bi-centennial project, the Woodson County Historical Society members have come in for a lot of the work and planning.

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Join and Support the  
Woodson County Historical Society

Life Membership \$25.00

Regular Membership \$2.00 a year

## JOEL MOODY —

The name of Joel Moody is a name that the most of our readers or perhaps the name has not been known by many for perhaps over a hundred years in Woodson County. But we believe that the name of Joel Moody should be told about.

In fact there were two Joel Moody's in the county during the 1860-70's. One of these men lived to the northeast part of the county. The station on the Katy railroad called Moody was named for the one that lived about a mile to the south of where that station was located in Coffey County.

However it is the Joel Moody that lived at the town of Belmont that we would like to tell about. But first we would like to tell about the first settler at Belmont.

In 1856, B. F. Foster, established a trading post for the Greater and Little Osage Indian tribes that were camped along the different tributaries of Big Sandy Creek. His trading post was evidently built almost resembling a fort. It was partially built of stone and logs. It was called the Belmont House and probably was the starting of the name Belmont from which the town, township and fort were named. We have found no more about B. F. Foster, although a Jonathan Foster came there about the next year, (1857) and homesteaded just across the road to the east of the "Belmont Corner".

Joel Moody was born near Fredericktown, New Brunswick, Canada, October 28, 1833. When less than a year old his parents moved to St. Charles, Illinois, where Mr. Moody received his elementary education. He then attended Oberlin College then to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, graduation in 1858. He chose law as his profession and was admitted to the bar at Columbus, Ohio.

On January 1, 1859, Joel Moody was married to Miss Elizebeth King. Shortly after his marriage, Moody with his bride headed for the new territory of Kansas. In the spring of 1859, Joel and Elizebeth of Lizzie as she became known settled at the little log cabin settlement of Belmont, in Woodson County.

The years 1860 through 1865 were very busy times for Joel Moody. While he was known as a farmer and stockman the 1860 census referred to his occupation as lawyer. His age was 27 years. Elizebeth Moody was 18 years old and was a native of Illinois. Also listed in the Moody household were Josie and Jane King each 42 years old. They were evidently older twin sisters of Elizebeth.

On June 21, 1860, Joel Moody was appointed as the fourth postmaster of the town of Belmont. He held this position until March 16, 1863, when the post office was turned over to Jonathan Foster.

At the general county election of November, 1860, Joel Moody was elected as county attorney of Woodson County. This was the second election of the county and Moody was the third county attorney.

Possibly this same year or perhaps the year before the Moody family moved into the old Belmont House. This was in the southeast corner of the section. While this was the 'claim' of Joel Moody he had no legal claim until the pre-emption law was passed after it was determined that the New York Indians would not settle here. On June 1, 1861, Joel and Lizzie Moody received a patent for the east half of the southeast quarter of section 32, and the west half of the southwest quarter of section 33, Twp. 25, Range 15.

Early in the year 1862, Joel Moody plotted out the town of Belmont. Evidently there had been no plot made up until this time although it has been recorded that in 1862 the town consisted of about 20 log cabins.

On April 5, 1862, Joel Moody and wife Lizzie, gave a warrenty deed to Lydia M. Pearsall to Lots 17, 18 and 25 feet off of the north part of lot 15, all in Block 47, in Town of Belmont, for a consideration of \$150 and was before Wallace D. McCune, Justice of the Peace, Woodson County.

Also on this day, Joel Moody and wife Lizzie sold Lots 17 and 18 in Block 26 to Charles Barreck for \$25 in Town of Belmont.

These lots were recorded in the office of Register of Deeds at Neosho Falls, but the plot did not seem to be recorded.

Perhaps one reason was that Moody made other plans at that time. While many of the residents in that locality had enlisted in various companies of the Ninth Kansas Volunteer Cavalry and in the Militia that was formed at the Town of Belmont, Moody helped recruit a company of Indians.

In July, 1861 Joel Moody was commissioned as First Lieutenant of the Second Indian Regiment. And on May 27, 1863, he was advanced to Captain, commanding Company H, of that Regiment.

There were three regiments of Indians in the service with officers who were citizens of Kansas. The First and Second Regiments were all recruited from Kansas; those recruits consisted mostly from refugee Indians from the Cherokee and Creek Nations, who were driven from their homes in the Indian Territory.



Joel Moody, probably in the later years of his busy life in the early days of Kansas.

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Following the Civil War, the town of Belmont began to deteriorate. However in the November election of 1865, Jonathan Foster, who replaced Moody as postmaster of Belmont in 1863, was elected to the Kansas Legislature as Representative from Woodson County. He received his certificate of election, but for some reason we have not learned Foster did not serve his term, but Joel Moody did go to the State Legislature at Topeka and serve that term.

Joel and Lizzie Moody were the parents of three sons, Robert, Ralph and Joel. Sometime in the latter 1860's the Moody family moved to Mound City, Kansas. Moody sold his claim and other holdings. In fall of 1866, Mr. Moody was editor of the Border Sentinel at Mound City.

Sometime in the 1880's, Elizebeth Moody died while still a young woman. In 1891 Moody again married to Mrs. Ella Choate Porter of Ft. Scott. After living awhile in Mound City Joel Moody again entered politics. In 1881 he was elected to the Kansas Legislature, and was a member of the Kansas State Senate in 1889 and 1891. During 1889 and '93 Joel Moody was a Regent of Kansas University.



For quite some time Mr. Moody was a director of the Kansas State Historical Society.

Joel Moody was author of several books, contributed to magazines, scientific, and literary articles, poems and historical articles for the Kansas Historical publications.

Not long after his second marriage, the Moody's moved to Abbeyville, La., where Mr. Moody published a newspaper.

We mentioned that it was in the later 1860's that the Moody family left Belmont. But Mr. Moody did not sell any of his land until 1870, when he sold 100 acres of it to W. P. Stephenson. The 80 acres where the town was located was not sold until February 21, 1880, when it was sold to J. B. Garland. It seems that by that time some or most of the log cabins around the Belmont corner had burned or fallen down.

It seems rather unfortunate that a man who had as much to do with the founding and shaping of Woodson County and possessed the ability and ambition that Joel Moody had, did not leave more on the county records.

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#### BURT BASEBALL TEAM OF 1918



Players in back row left to right. Elmer Crumrine, George Harding, Lee Steele, Hallie Elston. Front row, Leslie Stockebrand, Wallace Weide, Glen Guy, Fred Stockebrand, Glan Harding.

This picture was taken July 4, 1918. The writers father George Harding was catcher on the team and this game was played on his 43rd birthday.

The game was played on at a Turkey Creek Church picnic at the Ed Klingenberg farm, a half mile south and a half east of the church.

## OVERLAND MAIL —

In the April, 1975 issue of In The Beginning we had a picture of Awalt Lange and his dog. We didn't tell much about him only that he lived just to the west of the depot. Around 1930, he was day clerk at the Woodson Hotel.

But back in the days before the Rural Free Delivery of the mail was carried to various post offices called Star routes, Awalt Lange carried the mail from Humboldt to El Dorado.

Awalt carried the mail by buckboard, pulled by one horse. Leaving Humboldt, through Yates Center, on to Toronto, Eureka and El Dorado, going over one day and back the next. Yates Center was rather his relay station. Here he changed horses and ate his dinner. His dinner, of course, was ate at the Central Hotel, on the southeast corner of the square, and was run by his father Ferdinand G. Lange, who had moved his hotel from Kalida to Yates Center.

On one occasion when Awalt came to the crossing of the Verdigris River at Toronto, he found there had been a cloudburst up stream and the river was up and swift. There were no bridges and the river was up and mail must go through, so Awalt drove his horse into the swift current. The horse and buckboard went out of sight for a while. Awalt grabbed the mail bag and held it around him and commenced to swim. The horse was already swimming pulling the buckboard with him.

Some men on the opposite side of the river were yelling to him not to drive in, but it was too late, he was already in. Fortunately, both for himself and the horse, they were good swimmers.

His experiences were many on these lonesome trips. He had no danger from holdup or stickup men in those days.

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## ROUNDUP AT KIMBELL RANCH — 1913 —

Sometime during the summer of the dry year of 1913, a roundup was being held at the Kimbell Ranch. The Kimbell twins, Richard and Lewis, or better known as Dick and Punk, were boys of 13 years old, and were getting initiated into a cowboys life by living in an old rock house about three miles south of the ranch headquarters. Here they stayed by themselves, doing their own cooking, and chores around the place.

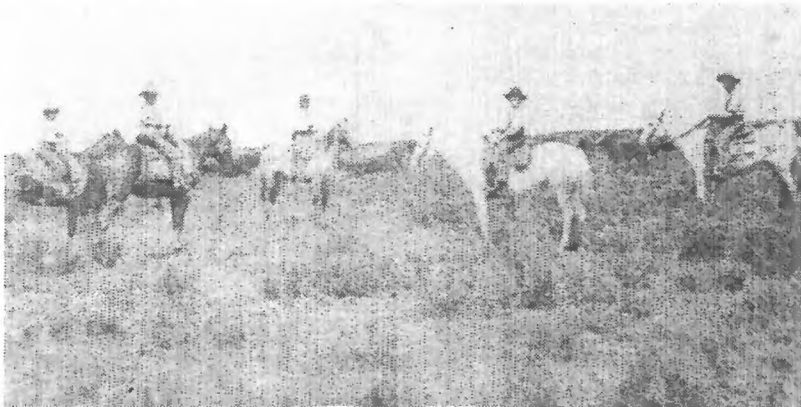
This old rock house was the abandoned farmstead of the Gus Fell family, who moved about 2 miles to the south along Cedar Creek. The house, barn and fences around the buildings were all made of native stone, but for many years has been just a rock pile.



Lou Harding, an uncle of the writer was on a visit here from northeast Indiana, where he had been a photographer. Ed Kimbell had asked him to come out to the ranch and take some pictures of the roundup. As Uncle Lou was staying at our home he asked me to go along. The roundup was about 7 1/2 miles from our farm.

We went out there in an open buggy pulled by a buckskin pony called Pet. The cattle were rounded up in a corner of a pasture when we got there. Besides Ed Kimbell and sons Dick and Punk, Jeff Daly, who was foreman of the ranch at that time and his son Robert Daly, about the same age as the Kimbell brothers. The three boys kept the herd bunched in the corner while the two men did the cutting. The cutting out started around ten o'clock with several hundred head of cattle, and continued hour after hour, with Uncle Lou taking some pictures.

We had left our farm early that morning without a thought of any thing to eat or drink. We do not know what the cowboys ate - perhaps a sandwich or fruit as they never stopped for noon. Sometime in the afternoon this little eight-year-old boy was getting powerful thirsty and hungry. The time dragged on. Finally I could stand it no longer so I said, "Uncle Lou, I sure am hungry". He did not answer for a while. Presently he turned to me and asked, "Are you still hungry?" Of course I was so he held out his hand all doubled up. Eagerly I reached out my hand and he gave me a cud of tobacco that he had been chewing on for hours. He thought it was funny but my sense of humor was worn out.



Pictured at the roundup - Left to right - Punk and Dick Kimbell, Ed Kimbell, Robert and Jeff Daly. Jeff was riding a horse named Ben that can be seen branded on left hip.

## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AT TURKEY CREEK CHURCH —

The 100th anniversary of the founding of the Turkey Creek Church was held September 5, 1976. Church has been held continuously since it was organized in 1876, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Weide about three miles to the northeast of the present church. The Carl Weide family came to this part of Woodson County, in summer of 1870.

Their home was in the northeast quarter of section 6, Twp. 24, R. 15. This they purchased in 1870, from the M.K. and T. Railroad. However there had been people living on that piece of land for probably 12 years. but they had no legal claim to it.

Carl's brother Godfrey Weide had came to America and lived along Turkey Creek about two miles up the creek, coming there about eleven years previous. This group of Weide's had been reared in the State Church of Germany, and had no knowledge of experimental religion. There was quite a German settlement in this vicinity.

In 1876, Rev. C. Emmel, who was serving the Humboldt Mission of which Yates Center was an appointment, held a revival at the Carl Weide home. According to the book "Fifty Years in the Kansas Conference of the Evangelical Association", "A mighty awakening soon followed and among the first converts was "Uncle Carl", who became a mighty missionary among his friends and relatives, leading many to Christ, among others was his brother Godfrey, who was a deeply pious but reserved man. These two brothers became the founders of a strong congregation at Turkey Creek, which was for many years a rival of the congregation in Yates Center.

Church was held at various homes for a while and then in the Askren, District No. 2 school house. It seems that for around ten years after the first class was organized that no Sunday school was held. It was in 1885, that Rev. Peter Schuman, who was minister at Yates Center and Turkey Creek, gathered these Germans together at the Dist. No. 2 schoolhouse and organized the first Sunday School in 1885.

When Rev. Emmel organized the first class at Turkey Creek, they were ten members, all named Weide. As listed in the "Fifty Years in the Kansas Conference", they were; Carl Weide and wife, Gottleig (Godfrey) Weide and wife, Henry Weide, Fritz Weide, Ann Weide, Carl Weide, Rose Weide, and Willie Weide. From this it is rather difficult to tie all of them down to the right family. Carl and Godfrey Weide both had sons named Carl, Fritz and William.



The Turkey Creek Evangelical Church as it looked when built in 1891. The only changes today are the cupalo is gone from the roof, the reddish brown trimming has all been painted white, and the chain hitching rack is gone. The front doors, shutters on the vestibule, and windows are the same, as is the diamond shaped stained glass window and the sign above it are as they were put there 85 years ago. The nine small pane diamond shaped window is the only stained glass in the church. The pews and alter are the original ones ordered by Rev. C. Brandt was authorized to go to Humboldt and Atchinson to order.

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During the 100 years the Turkey Creek Church has been served by thirty-eight ministers, who served from the Humboldt Mission, the Yates Center Circuit, the Woodson Mission with Cedar Creek, for a while alone, back with Yates Center, then Toronto and now Gridley. For a few years was with Virgil and Crandall. The ministers were; C. Emmel, C. Woehlte, E. J. Troyer, E A. Bruner, Herman Koepsel, Peter S. Schuman, T. R. Nanninga, C. Brandt, Ferdinand Harder, W. F. Wolthausen, Albert Rodewald, Ben Barthel, Alfred Nanson, Lucas Nanninga, E. S. Spangler, F. E. Wendland, Charles Meeder, E. C. White, W. T. Morti, H. Steenback, F. B. Walter, W. J. Huscher.

E. F. Boehringer, Lee Wright, David W. Bletscher, Max Wright, Robert Hayes, Dwight Julian, Mrs. Nellie Klingman, Walter J. Chittenden, B. F. Faulkner, Robert Vance, V. C. Buttermore, Richard Johnson, David Mack, Joseph Whitsitt, Russell Dittmar, and George Chase, the present pastor.

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During the 91 years since the first Sunday School was organized there have been eleven Sunday School Superintendents - namely Carl Schreiber, August Wrampe, Emil Opperman, Ed Klingenberg, Walter Weide, August G. Beine, Charles R. Mulsow, John Stockebrand, Marvin Beine, Richard Mulsow and Lester A. Harding the present superintendent.

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A more detailed story of the founding of this church, stories and happenings down through the hundred years, pictures of 28 of the 38 preachers, pictures of ten of the eleven superintendents, along with many other pictures, are in the small book, "100th Anniversary of the Turkey Creek United Methodist Church - 1876-1976." compiled and written by Lester A. Harding. These are for sale at less than 25 cents above cost. They are being sold for \$2.50 plus 35 cents for postage if they are mailed.

This is a 45 page book with pictures of over 115 different people.



"The Little White Church in the Valley", can be seen to the right of the picture taken from the top of the hill west of the church. One can see for miles down the Turkey Creek Valley from the hilltop where the Old Lone Tree stood.

## MORE ABOUT THE FLOOD OF 1951 —

Many tales came out of the flood of 1951, that swept muddy swirling water through the town of Neosho Falls.

In our last issue we told that water was up under the eaves of the George Moerer home to the south of the Falls. Curtis Weiland who lived just to the north of the Moerer home was the last of his family to leave the home. He had put some large hogs in the family pickup. Someone had evidently come by minutes later and lowered the endgate of the pickup so the hogs could get out. A large boar either jumped out or fell out and was drowned. The hogs staying in the pickup survived although they were in water.

After water receded several sheep belonging to Kenneth Ellis were found dead in the fence row, two miles south of Neosho Falls.

At the Eugene Leedy home about three miles up the river from the Falls, Mr. and Mrs. Leedy and two sons went to the upstairs as the water began to creep into the lower part of the house. From the upstairs window they were rescued late the second day by a motor boat that went into the water from the road about a mile south of the Leedy home.

Between two and three miles east of Neosho Falls, just over the Allen County line, the Leslie Mentzer farmstead was out of the floodwaters, but Billie Mentzer had plenty of activity with his small motorboat. A mile to the west of the Mentzer home the farmstead of Ben Heide was surrounded by floodwaters, and the family had taken refuge upstairs. Billie brought his boat to an upstairs window on the north or upstream side of the house. As the Heide family all got into the boat a pin in the motor was sheared off. Occupant of the boat held the boat against the house until Billie could repair the motor.

A family named Cope, living along the road west of the Punkin Koley school two miles east of the Falls, left their house and went to the barn. They never had a car or tractor but depended on horses for his farming. Cope hitched a team to a wagon and took his family to the barn, where they climbed in the barn loft and stayed there until Billie Mentzer came with his boat and rescued them. The Cope family had a calf, a dog and some cats in the loft with them. Although water completely covered their farm all of the horses survived except one colt. The horses were all on the old Santa Fe railroad right-of-way that kept their heads out of the water.

About a half mile west of the Mentzer home, a family named \_\_\_\_\_, lived in a small one story house. Before the flood waters reached its peak, Billy Mentzer went to take the family out, but they decided that the family would be all right there, but said that if they needed help, they would fire his shotgun. While this

house was about a mile from the river the water found passage through low land to the north and a swift current swept through where this house was as the flood waters raised. The small house was swept off its foundation against a large elm tree just to the south of where it stood. A hole was cut in the roof, the family taken out through this hole, the electric wiring was cut from the house and used to tie the family in the tree. A couple of shots were fired from the shotgun. Mentzer's heard the shots, Billie and his father Leslie started out in the boat. As they approached the house such a heavy current was going by the house it was almost impossible to stop the boat. Leslie thinking he would help slow the boat reached out and grabbed hold of a tree limb, but the impact jerked him out of the boat. He hung onto the limb until Billie could get the boat back again. It took almost thirty minutes before Leslie was back in the boat. The family was taken out of the tree and to safety.

In the north part of Neosho Falls, Charlie O. Mentzer was living in a two story house. He was completely blind as the floodwaters crept into his house he made his way upstairs. All he took with him was the Mentzer family Bible that had belonged to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Mentzer. The Bible was later passed on to his sister, Mrs. Clara Williams.

There are many more such tales that we have related, but for now we will not tell them.



Boys in the High School window at Neosho Falls. Methodist Church in background. Boat bringing in refugees. Picture taken by Leo Kunkel at west side of school.



**STEWART WILLE, NOTED KANSAS MUSICIAN —**

Stewart Wille, only son and second child of Wm. C. and Margaret A. Wille, was born in Yates Center, January 15, 1892, and died in 1975 at the age of 83 years.



Stewart Wille at the age of 17 years.

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Wm. C. Wille father of Stewart was born in Chicago in 1852. His parents were Henry J. and Caroline Wille. The Henry J. Wille family came to Woodson County and to Kalida early in 1875. In the fall of 1875 when the town of Yates Center was started, Henry Wille moved the first house to the town on the northwest corner of the square, which in a short time became an 'Inn'. This was on the corner where the Woodson Hotel was later built.

On November 16, 1880, Wm. C. Wille was married to Miss Margaret Ann "Maggie" Stewart. They were the parents of two children, Jessica and Stewart Wille.

When Stewart was about 14 years old the family moved to McPherson, Kans., where Wm. C. Wille ran a harness shop. Both of the children were talented musicians. Jessica taught piano in

different schools in Kansas and Oklahoma, before going to California where she also taught piano for several years before her death in 1973.

Studying music through high school at McPherson, and showing great musical ability, drew the attention of a group of business men in that town enough that they raised enough money so that young Wille could study music in Russia after his graduation from Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kans.

After returning to the United States, Wille began performing in concert tours. Sometime in the 1920s, Stewart Wille toured the world with many famous musicians and accompanied Ernestine Schumann-Heinkand. For 16 years was associated with Walter Tibbett as soloist and accompanist. Later he accompanied such singers as Lily Pons, Walter Castle, Robert Merrill and others.

Wille retired in 1958 and moved to Los Angeles, where his sister was. Here he coached pianists at his studio, and was active in the Music Teachers Association. He was also a judge in area auditions for the New York Metropolitan Opera.

Neither Stewart Wille nor his sister Jessica ever married.

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#### THE YATES CENTER, NEOSHO FALLS HACK LINE —

Back in the days of hack and stagecoach there was a regular daily route between these two towns. Dave Chrisman, a middle-aged German made daily trips carrying the mail and hauling passengers. He made his headquarters at noon at the Central Hotel in Yates Center.

That was before the days of the railroads and all the mail came in by coach, buck board or horseback. Mr. Chrisman picked up a few shekels by carrying passengers. Neosho Falls was the starting point and people from that town having business at the county seat found it convenient to come over with him, returning the same afternoon.

It will be remembered that along in the late 1870's and early 1880's there was nothing but mud roads in the county and the distance between given points was often shortened by cross country driving. For instance when one wanted to drive from the county seat to the Falls he took a northeasterly direction and kept on going until he struck the hill overlooking the Falls, the biggest and best town in the county at that time.

It wasn't long until the Missouri Pacific road was built from Fort Scott through Yates Center to Wichita. The coming of the daily trains spelled finis to Dave Chrisman and his hack.

## TOWN OF DEFIANCE — 100 Years Ago

During the year of 1875, and the fore part of 1876, the town of Defiance was probably at the height of its glory as a town and county seat. A part of this story came from the files of the Woodson County Post, published at Neosho Falls. And a part of it coming from the records of the Woodson County County Commissioners.

Neosho Falls — May 26, 1875 — "We visited the City of Brotherly Love" (Defiance) yesterday in company with our fat friend, C. B. Graves, and found everything quiet at that place. The County officers were at their posts and attending to business. Holloway is busy on Eminence Township assessment rolls. There is some building going up on the east side of Main Street. Mr. Ault, at the store of Taylor and Ault was busy as a bee, but pleasant and familiar as a half grown grasshopper. They have a good stock of goods.

Freer never loses an opportunity to lay us under obligations. Defiance has no hoppers worth mentioning. June 6 — Grass hoppers rose and flew north yesterday by the millions. The grass hoppers declined to fly Sunday. The wind did not suit them.

June 10, 1875 — Last week Samuel Michenor had one of his horses stolen, which breaks up his team and leaves him in a bad fix to attend to his growing crops. It comes particular hard on Mr. Michenor as he is not able to stand the loss. (Samuel Michenor was chairman of the Board of County Commissioners)

Our farmer friends and horse owners should band themselves together for mutual protection.

Stitcher is now running an ice cream and peanut stand at Defiance this week and is doing a good business and attends to it.

Defiance has a new sidewalk from the Freer House to the Courthouse, but it is made of inch boards and is already badly broken.

We learn from Dr. Jones that the big Camp meeting on Owl Creek, near Defiance, is well attended.

January 29, 1876 — Board of County Commissioners called a meeting at Defiance, to examine petition heretofore presented and compared same with assessment rolls of 1875. Names that do not appear on other roll. 99 names that did not appear on said assessment roll, 38 names appearing were not legal electors of said county — 4 signers did not petition election, 3 petitioners did not sign their name. Therefore not three-fifths of those who were legal electors of county on said petition as shown on assessment rolls of the county.

Now therefore the order here-to-fore made on said 9th day of July, 1875 calling said election is hereby declared illegal and void and the Board do here-by revoke said order.

Defiance, Kansas  
29th January, 1876

I.N. Holloway, County Clerk  
S. Michenor, Chairman

L. G. Porter, Commissioner

\* \* \* \* \*

The Board of County Commissioners met at the County Clerk's office in Defiance on September 4, 1876.

"Board of County Commissioners met on call of the Chairman, met in a special session for the purpose of canvassing the votes cast at the special election for the relocation of the County seat of said county held on the 18th day of August, 1875. Present were: Commissioners S. Michenor, L. G. Porter, T. J. Eagle, County Clerk, I. N. Holloway, and J. E. Pickett, County Attorney.

And it appearing to the satisfaction of the Board that the poll books of the several voting of the county were stolen from the office of the County Clerk on the night of the 1st day of September, 1876. Also the duplicate books returned by several Township Trustees were also stolen on the same night. The Board determines to canvass the vote shown by the ballots cast at said election, said ballots being deposited in the office of the County Clerk as required by law.

The result of said canvass the Board finds that at said election the towns of Yates Center, Defiance and the city of Neosho Falls were voted on for County seat of said county and that said places received the following number of votes respectively to-wit: The town of Yates Center received 355 votes - City of Neosho Falls 301 and the town of Defiance 235 votes. And no place having a majority of all votes cast at said election, it is hereby ordered that a second election for the relocation of the County seat of Woodson County be held on the 12th day of September, 1876, at which time voting shall be confined to Yates Center and Neosho Falls, the places receiving the highest number of votes.

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This was a hotly contested fight with the result of Yates Center with 488 votes and Neosho Falls 426. This was the last of the elections for the county seat of Woodson County.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Board of County Commissioners met on the 16th day of September the votes.

The Board then proceeded to Yates Center and to examine the building owned by Abner Yates that he had brought from Kalida the year before. Mr. Yates offered to donate the use of this building to Woodson County free of charge as long as they use it for courtroom and County offices. The Board accepted and assigned the north room downstairs to the County Clerk. Center room to County Treasurer and County Superintendent. South room to Probate Judge and Register of Deeds. The Clerk of District Court, Sheriff and County Attorney to occupy the room upstairs.

The first meeting of the County officials in the new courthouse in Yates Center was on October 2, 1876.

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October 7, 1876 — Moving the courthouse to Yates Center.

The contract for removing the courthouse from Defiance to Yates Center was let to H. T. Chellis for the sum of \$200.00. Mr. Chellis agrees to move said building and place it on any lot in the townsite of Yates Center, designated by the Board in as near the same condition as it is now, as can be done.

\* \* \* \* \*

November 11, 1876 —

(The court house was moved to the northeast corner of the square at what is now 122 North Main.)

"H. T. Chellis agrees to rearrange the offices according to an agreement made and is to have \$75.00 in addition to the contract made for the moving the courthouse from Defiance to Yates Center."

Abner Yates offered to donate one hundred and twenty-five lots in Yates Center to the county. The Board hereby refuse to accept said lots. The Public Square had already been donated to the county as had the lot where the courthouse was located.

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Defiance — June — 1876 —

Some little boys of B. F. Johnson, who lives one mile northwest of Defiance were playing on a stone wall. One fell off breaking both bones in his right arm. Dr. J. R. Harding of Defiance attended the boy.

Defiance now has another blacksmith, George Harding is again at the forge making the sparks fly.

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At the time it lost the county seat of government, Defiance had two hotels, courthouse, postoffice, school, general store, tavern and blacksmith shop, ice cream and peanut stand.

## NIGGER DIE PASTURE —

Oftimes over the county various pastures were known by names of people or events. In North township about 12 miles northwest of Yates Center is a pasture - the south half section of section 2, Twp. 24, R. 14, and is on the north side of the road a half mile north of the Askren Cemetery.

This pasture is still known as the Nigger Die pasture, although we have heard it called Nigger Dive and Nigger Dye. The word Nigger is rather outmoded these days, and the word Black is used.

To get the background of this story we have to go back to a ranch that was about three miles north on Duck Creek. This ranch was first established about two miles north of the Nikkeltown school house by Bernard Pauls (Pronounced like Powells), who was a leader and one of the financial backers of the German-Russian settlement of Nikkeltown.

This ranch later went under several different names and owners. One of these owners was J. D. Payne, who came here from Texas. Besides his family he brought several Negroes, Steve Carr, his wife Gertrude and two children, Gertrude and Dimmick; two half brothers, Jack Oliver and Jack's younger brother whose name we never learned. The younger brother died not long after they came here, and was buried in the Fair Hope Cemetery along Big Creek in Coffey County.

While Steve Carr and Jack Oliver were half-brothers they were not much alike. Steve was only part Negro and part Indian, of the Osage tribe. Both were seasoned cowboys, good riders and ropers.

As we said in the beginning the ranch on Duck Creek was a different story. The story about this ranch was in Vol. 5, No. 20 - October, 1972 issue of 'In The Beginning', we will go back to around 1895, when these Negroes moved into a small shack on the prairie in the half section that received its name from them. This was after J. D. Payne had sold the Spade Ranch. We believe that W. B. Butler, the writers grandfather had built this small building as he did that kind of work and had rented this pasture for several years, and had broken out about 40 acres of sod. It has since all gone back to prairie grass. This shack had a small basement and was located a half mile north of the Askren Cemetery. From here the two little black children went to the Askren, Dist. No. 2 school.

Jim Dye, a well known cattlemen in the western part of the county and eastern Greenwood County, had an interest in this half section at that time, hence the name Nigger Dye. But it is the name of Nigger Die that we will stick to for now.



Jack Oliver was a real bronc rider, and the story is told that some one up around Gridley had an outlaw horse that no one had been able to ride, so one Saturday this horse was brought to the old Dempsey (Spade) Ranch, and a crowd gathered there to see if Jack Oliver could ride this outlaw horse. Some of the men saddled the horse and left the halter and rope on him, no bridle. Jack took a silver dollar from his pocket and placed it in the stirrup and said that if it fell out while he was in the saddle, who ever saw it could have it. He then stepped into the saddle and rode that horse through all kinds of bucking, swapping ends, finally running around the corral several times and stopped exhausted. Jack then stepped down and took his silver dollar out of the stirrup, handed the halter rope to the owner and said, "I guess he's ready for use now".

Sometime in the early 1890's, several young men, among them were Asa Miller, Grant Stines, Tom J. Corkery, Jack Oliver and perhaps others, went to a rodeo somewhere west of Virgil, Kans. In the bronc riding Jack Oliver drew a very mean bronc. He rode the horse through all of its bucking tricks, and as the pickup man talked to him after the ride he said that he was all right.

That evening coming home they were on horseback, Jack Oliver became sick. He was taken to a doctor in Virgil, and found that the bronc ride had badly hurt him inside. A team and wagon were borrowed and his friends brought him home in the wagon. A day or so later Jack Oliver died in the small shack on the prairie, from the result of the bronc ride, and the name of Nigger Die originated for this half section of pasture.

Jack Oliver was a very black man and sometimes drove a buckskin pony to a cart. Amil Light recalled to this writer several years ago what he remembered about Oliver. When the occasion arose he was a rather tough character. His face, hands, arms and body had many knife wounds received in fights. The tale was also told that when he was working at the Payne Ranch, he and Ira Martin, who also worked there, rode into Gridley one night. Somewhere in a back room a poker game was in progress. Oliver and Martin got into the game and were luckily winning when Ace Merrill, who lived near Gridley made a remark about "a nigger". Oliver did not answer but presently turned to Martin and very low asked for his knife. Martin refused to give it to him and as soon as he could got the black man out and took him home.

Steve Carr was of an entirely different nature than his half-brother. He was quiet, a good neighbor and well liked. The Carr's did not stay here very long after the death of Jack Oliver. They went to

Oklahoma, where as part Indian Carr received a "headright" from the government.

When the writer's father George Harding, who came here from northeastern Indiana he had done considerable wrestling and boxing. He met Steve Carr soon after they came here. Carr wanted my father to teach him how to box and wrestle. Dad told him he would if Carr would learn him how to ride and rope. But the Carr's left before they got much trade learning done.

While these colored people were working for the Spade Ranch, along Duck Creek, Steve Carr was foreman for J. D. Payne. About a mile north of the ranch just across the county line into Coffey County was the farm of G. Weide. The story was told that the Weide's had some cattle get out and into a corn field on the Spade Ranch. Mr. Weide went after them, but Steve Carr had penned them up and refused to let them go without damages being paid. Carr stood at the gate and after some argument Weide started toward Carr with a drawn pitchfork. As Weide came closer Carr drew a revolver and the men stood facing each other.

As Weide drew closer with the fork tines pointed at Carr, the latter never moved a muscle. With only about four or five feet distance between them, Weide stopped and lowered the pitchfork. Witnesses told that Carr's face was almost white as he drew a deep breath and said, "Ol' man, you'll never know how close you came to getting killed."

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The Weide mentioned above was Gottfried C. Weide, who with his wife Johanne (Mollnau) Weide, were natives of Mosbach, Germany. They came to America in 1882, settling on the Coffey side of the Woodson-Coffey County line, about six miles west of where US-75 crosses the county line.

They were the parents of ten children; Fritz C., Henry A., Charley, Rachel, Minnie, August G., Augusta Mino, Mary Mathilda, William C., and Otto. The first seven were born in Germany. The youngest three in Coffey County.

Fritz C. was married to Mathilda Stockebrand; Henry A. married Mary Fricke; Charley never married; Rachel married Lindsey Hill; Minnie married Henry Oswald; August G. married Rose Blick; Augusta married August Lauber; Mary Mathilda married Otto Reep; William married Augusta C. Meyer; Otto married Louisa Meyer. Most of this family moved in and around Yates Center in later years.

## PATRONS OF WOODSON COUNTY HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Brown's Western Auto  
 John V. Glades Agency  
 Woodson Co. Co-op  
 Street Abstract Co. Inc.  
 State Exchange Bank  
 Schornick Oil Co.  
 Self Service Grocery  
 Krueger's Variety  
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Beine  
 Hi-Way Food Basket  
 Bill Herman  
 Piqua Farmer's Co-op  
 Gualding Oil Co.  
 Donald E. Ward  
 Morton Equipment Co.  
 Swope & Son Implement Co.  
 Campbell Plumbing & Electric  
 Clyde Hill  
 Cantrell Buick-Pontiac  
 Paul C. Laidlaw  
 Rogers Bros. Garage  
 Charles H. Carpenter  
 Newtex Manufacturing Co.  
 J.C. Schnell  
 W. D. Smith & Son Furniture  
     & Undertaking  
 Superior Building Supply, Inc.  
 Glenn Shaw  
 Pringle Ranch - J. W. & J. Richard  
     W. K. Stockebrand  
 Herring Hardware & Supply

Woody's Cafe  
 Kimbell Ranch - Ed Kimbell  
 Edwin H. Bideau Associate  
     Agencies - Chanute  
 Al's Jewelry  
 First National Bank - Toronto  
 Blackjack Cattle Co.  
 Wilma Mark  
 Yates Center Elevator  
 Jasper's Shopping Spot  
 Bill Taylor - Gen. Agent  
     Woodson Co. Farm Bureau  
 Atkin Clinic  
 Daly Western Supply  
 Pyeatte - Jaynes Ins. Agency  
 Dyer Chevrolet  
 Linde Barber Shop  
 House of Fabrics  
 Milton Wrampe  
 Yates Center News  
 E. E. Light  
 Atkin Rexall Pharmacy  
 Gambles Friendly Store  
 Campbell Funeral Home  
 Mr. & Mrs. Glen Baker  
 Piqua State Bank  
 Wendall McMurray  
 McGinty-Coffman Dept. Store  
 E. Guy Reid  
 J & W Manufacturing Co.  
 Everybody's Grocery